



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913
PH (517) 373.1758 | FAX (517) 373.0938
www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/cassis/

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Jan. 26, 2006

CONTACT: Alec Lloyd
(517) 373-1619

Third Graders initiate Cassis legislation

State Sen. Nancy Cassis today introduced legislation to designate the cherry as the state fruit. Senate Bill 1013 was inspired by letters from Cathy Stando's third grade students from Heritage Elementary School in Highland Township.

"The students correctly noted that Michigan has no state fruit and that we are the top state in the nation in terms of tart cherry production," said Cassis, R-Novi and chair of the Senate Finance Committee. "This project is helping to educate our young people about how our system of government works and why it is important to get involved in the political process."

Michigan produces both sweet and tart cherries. The 2005 tart cherry crop was valued at more than \$47 million and Michigan accounted for more than 75 percent of the nationwide total. Though not as dominant in sweet cherry production, Michigan produced an addition \$16 million in sweet cherries that year.

"The letters had a wealth of information on what percentage of the national crop our state produced, how many tons and the nutritious properties of cherries," Cassis said. "I commend them for their solid research. It is high time we recognize Michigan's important role as the cherry capital of the nation by designating it the state fruit."

Other state symbols include: the state flower (Apple Blossom), state bird (American Robin), state soil (Kalkaska Sand), state stone (Petoskey), state fish (Brook Trout), state reptile

(Painted Turtle), state fossil (Mastadon), state tree (White Pine), state gem (Chlorastrolite), state wildflower (Dwarf Lake Iris) and state game mammal (White-Tailed Deer).

#####